

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES
CLASS SPECIFICATION

<u>CLASS TITLE</u>	<u>POSITION CODE</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE</u>
CHILD PROTECTION ASSOCIATE SPECIALIST	07162	3-1-16
CHILD PROTECTION SPECIALIST	07163	3-1-16
CHILD PROTECTION ADVANCED SPECIALIST	07161	3-1-16

SERIES DISCUSSION:

The Child Protection Specialist Series encompasses professional positions in the Department of Children and Family Services which perform investigations of alleged child neglect, abuse and sexual abuse and do not serve on a continuous basis as line supervisors of professional staff. Such investigations are initiated within twenty-four hours of report to determine if child is in immediate danger and, if necessary, a safety plan or protective custody is arranged in order to prevent further danger to the child.

Positions in this class are responsible for protecting the lives of children with the primary focus on performing immediate investigations of reports of child abuse or neglect and making related final determinations (allegations indicated or unfounded). Child protection services are directed toward conducting interviews and assessing home situation for danger to the child.

Certain positions performing clearly defined functions which are part of the necessary framework for, and in support of, the delivery of protective services are also included in this series. These functions include: interviewing alleged victims and perpetrators, other members of the household and witnesses; preparation of documents in case file for custody hearings and perpetrator prosecution; providing testimony in court and explaining child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and investigative procedures to schools, health and medical providers, law enforcement officers and other community and governmental entities.

The illustrative examples of work of each level within this series are descriptive illustrations of the type of work encompassed by the series but should not be interpreted as the only Child Protection Specialist series duties that could be performed. The Child Protection Specialist may provide counseling and advocacy services, with therapy usually administered by others.

Positions within the Department of Children and Family Services where duties and responsibilities are characteristic of other specialized series are excluded from the Child Protection Specialist Series. For example, Child Welfare Specialist staff who perform case work/case management functions are encompassed by the Child Welfare Specialist series.

CHILD PROTECTION SPECIALIST SERIES DISCUSSION (Continued)

Nursing positions engaged in conducting investigations of child abuse and neglect are subsumed by the Child Welfare Nurse Specialist. Professional casework supervisors are currently classified in the Public Service Administrator classification.

In order for the agency to meet Council on Accreditation (COA) standards, some work roles require that employees possess certain minimum education and experience attainments, or be directly supervised by workers who meet such standards. These professional requirements have been incorporated into this classification standard, where a master's degree in social work (MSW) reflects a preferred candidate selection criterion, and the MSW degree represents a minimum requirement at the Advanced Specialist class level.

The college or university issuing a bachelor's or master's degree must be accredited, and the degree program in social work must be approved by the Council on Social Work Education. The human services degrees mentioned in the requirements refer to social work, psychology, psychiatric nursing, psychiatry, mental health counseling, rehabilitation counseling, pastoral counseling, marriage and family therapy, and human services. Such degree areas may constitute a job-specific qualification requirement, where the duties of the position require the related academic and work experience background.

CHILD PROTECTION ASSOCIATE SPECIALIST

POSITION CODE: 07162

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF WORK:

Under direct supervision, protects children by performing developmental level work related to investigations of alleged child neglect, abuse and sexual abuse cases, interviews alleged victims and perpetrators, other members of the household and witnesses; participates in home assessment for danger to child; participates in preparation and documentation of case file for custody hearings and perpetrator prosecution; carries an increasing case load with decreasing closeness of guidance and review by supervisor and/or higher level protection specialists; testifies in court; completes agency-sponsored training programs.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF WORK:

1. As a developing protection specialist, completes agency-sponsored training programs; assists, participates in and accompanies supervisor and/or higher level protection specialist, as assigned, with all duties and responsibilities performed by Child Protection Specialists; carries an increasing case load with decreasing guidance and review.
2. As a developing protection specialist, responds to child abuse/neglect report within twenty-four hours; determines if child is in immediate danger by interviewing child and siblings in person; devises a safety plan or, in consultation with the supervisor, makes the decision to take child into protective custody if child's life or well-being are at risk and transports child to approved placement when safety intervention is required; takes child to hospital for medical treatment and evaluation as needed to ensure physical well-being; contacts relatives of child for home evaluation and possible placement of child with relatives or foster home or shelter; prepares paper work according to department rules, procedure and accreditation standards and reviews with higher level protection specialist, as assigned, notifies state and/or local police and state's attorneys of all priority one child abuse and neglect reports.
3. As a developing protection specialist, interviews all subjects of the report including but not limited to parents, relatives, neighbors, police, teachers, doctors, nurses and others; prepares and reviews with higher level protection specialist, as assigned, comprehensive reports to support or refute alleged neglects/abuse and to assess its seriousness; testifies in court as to the custody hearing and/or prosecution case; transports child to placement as determined in the court hearing.
4. Completes and reviews with higher level protection specialist, as assigned, all child abuse/neglect tracking forms, pre-placement prevention and medical forms, relative check-list, foster care placement protocols, etc.
5. Based on assessment of child's safety and family needs, provides directly or ensures referral for social and other services. When placement is required, addresses issues of separation with the child and the family; prepares birth family for necessary follow-up court and agency intervention; prepares care-giving family for child's needs, care-giving responsibilities, family contact and concurrent planning; identifies family's desires regarding religious and cultural preferences.

CHILD PROTECTION ASSOCIATE SPECIALIST (Continued)

6. As a developing protection specialist, explains child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and investigative procedures to schools, health and medical providers, law enforcement officers and other community and governmental entities as assigned.
7. Answers and processes telephone calls reporting alleged child abuse/neglect or sexual abuse and asks questions to clarify and complete information from witness; evaluates and reviews information against established criteria with higher level protection specialist as assigned.
8. Participates in quality assurance and improvement activities related to assessing the quality of services delivered by participating in peer review; consumer-oriented satisfaction activities; local, site, and/or regional quality teams; and action planning.
9. Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS:

Education and Experience

Preferably requires a master's degree in social work and one year of directly related professional experience, including casework/case management experience related to family preservation or family reunification, adoption, youth development, counseling, and advocacy services, or a related field;

OR

Requires a master's degree in a related human service field, in criminal justice, criminal justice administration, or law enforcement and one year of directly related professional experience, including casework/case management experience related to family preservation or family reunification, adoption, youth development, counseling, and advocacy services, or a related field;

OR

Requires a bachelor's degree in social work and three years of directly related professional experience, including casework/case management experience related to family preservation or family reunification, adoption, youth development, counseling, and advocacy services, or a related field;

OR

Requires a bachelor's degree in a related human service field, in criminal justice, criminal justice administration, or law enforcement and three years of directly related professional experience, including casework/case management experience related to family preservation or family reunification, adoption, youth development, counseling, and advocacy services, or a related field.

The college or university issuing a degree must be accredited, and the degree program in social work must be approved by the Council on Social Work Education.

This class is included as an Upward Mobility Program credential title.

CHILD PROTECTION ASSOCIATE SPECIALIST (Continued)

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities

Requires working knowledges of the basic principles and techniques in a child welfare field.

Requires an elementary knowledge of the Department of Children and Family Services rules and regulations as they apply to child abuse/neglect investigation.

Requires ability to learn to assess home situations and family relationships for child abuse/neglect.

Requires knowledge of child growth and development

Requires ability to write reports.

Requires the ability to successfully complete agency-sponsored training programs and meet mandated licensure requirements.

Requires ability to relate positively with people.

In addition to having a written and spoken knowledge of the English language, candidates may also be required to speak and write a foreign language at a colloquial skill level in carrying out position duties in conjunction with non-English speaking individuals.

Requires possession of a valid driver's license, daily access to an automobile and proof of vehicle insurance.

Requires physical, visual and auditory ability to carry out assigned duties.

Requires the ability to satisfactorily pass an in-depth background check as a condition of employment.

CHILD PROTECTION SPECIALIST

POSITION CODE: 07163

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF WORK:

Under direction, protects children by performing journeyman level investigations of alleged child neglect, abuse and sexual abuse cases, interviews alleged victims and perpetrators, other members of the household and witnesses; assesses home situation for danger to child; takes child from home and places child in protective custody if necessary to prevent further neglect or abuse; prepares and documents case file for custody hearings and perpetrator prosecution; testifies in court; completes agency-sponsored training programs.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF WORK:

1. Responds to child abuse/neglect report within twenty-four hours; determines if child is in immediate danger by interviewing child and siblings in person; uses risk assessment instruments and other diagnostic tools such as anatomically correct dolls as an aid to elicit responses from preschool children; devises a safety plan or, in consultation with the supervisor, makes the decision to take child into protective custody if child's life or well-being are at risk and transports child to approved placement when safety intervention is required; takes child to hospital for medical treatment and evaluation as needed to ensure physical well-being; contacts relatives of child for home evaluation and possible placement of child with relatives; or foster home or shelter; prepares paper work according to department rule, procedure and accreditation standards for case file and service provider payment; notifies state and/or local police and state's attorneys of all priority one child abuse and neglect reports such as those cases resulting in death, brain damage, skull fractures, internal injuries, wounds, allegations of torture, or sexual penetration, exploitation or molestation and other serious injuries resulting from abuse or neglect.
2. Interviews all subjects of the report including but not limited to parents, relatives, neighbors, police, teachers, doctors, nurses and others; prepares comprehensive reports to support or refute alleged neglect/abuse and to assess its seriousness; consults with states attorney; contacts public defender for parent and/or alleged perpetrator; prepares evidentiary documents for court hearings on temporary custody; testifies in court as to the custody hearing and/or prosecution case; transports child to placement as determined in the court hearing.
3. Completes all child abuse/neglect tracking forms, pre-placement prevention and medical forms, relative check-list, foster care placement protocols, etc., as required by investigative and placement process.
4. Based on assessment of child's safety and family needs, provides directly or ensures referral for social and other services. When placement is required, addresses issues of separation with the child and the family; prepares birth family for necessary follow-up court and agency intervention; prepares care-giving family for child's needs, care-giving responsibilities, family contact and concurrent planning; identifies family's desires regarding religious and cultural preferences.

CHILD PROTECTION SPECIALIST (Continued)

5. Serves as the agency “ambassador” and liaison to law enforcement agencies, States Attorney Offices, hospitals and schools; maintains regular, formalized contacts with the groups cited above; under management direction, develops formal, written agreements with the above groups identifying protocol or reporting, information sharing, notification and public education responsibilities of each party; develops arrangements with police for assisting DCFS with investigations; completes arrangements with hospitals for providing medical treatment and examinations to alleged victims; makes arrangements with schools for allowing access to child subjects; delivers public education programs covering reporting requirements, investigative procedures and child abuse prevention services.
6. Explains, as the Department of Children and Family Service spokesperson, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and investigative procedures to schools, health and medical providers, law enforcement officers and other community and governmental entities.
7. Answers and processes telephone calls reporting alleged child abuse/neglect or sexual abuse and asks questions to clarify and complete information from witness; evaluates information against established criteria to determine sufficiency of facts for referral for an on-site investigation. Explains to caller when information is insufficient for an on-site investigation.
8. Completes agency-sponsored training programs to develop greater professional skills and knowledge of the philosophy, rules and regulations of the agency and meet mandated licensure requirements.
9. Participates in quality assurance and improvement activities related to assessing the quality of services delivered by participating in peer review; consumer-oriented satisfaction activities; local, site, and/or regional quality teams; and action planning.
10. Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS:

Education and Experience

Preferably requires a master's degree in social work and two years of directly related professional experience, including casework/case management experience related to family preservation or family reunification, adoption, youth development, counseling, and advocacy services, or a related field;

OR

Requires a master's degree in a related human service field, in criminal justice, criminal justice administration, or law enforcement and two years of directly related professional experience, including casework/case management experience related to family preservation or family reunification, adoption, youth development, counseling, and advocacy services, or a related field;

OR

CHILD PROTECTION SPECIALIST (Continued)

Requires a bachelor's degree in social work and four years of directly related professional experience, including casework/case management experience related to family preservation or family reunification, adoption, youth development, counseling, and advocacy services, or a related field;

OR

Requires a bachelor's degree in a related human service field, in criminal justice, criminal justice administration, or law enforcement and four years of directly related professional experience, including casework/case management experience related to family preservation or family reunification, adoption, youth development, counseling, and advocacy services, or a related field.

The college or university issuing a degree must be accredited, and the degree program in social work must be approved by the Council on Social Work Education.

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities

Requires working knowledges of the basic principles and techniques in a child welfare field.

Requires a working knowledge of the Department of Children and Family Services rules and regulations as they apply to child abuse/neglect investigation.

Requires ability to assess home situations and family relationships for child abuse/neglect.

Requires knowledge of child growth and development.

Requires ability to write reports.

Requires the ability to successfully complete agency-sponsored training programs and meet mandated licensure requirements.

Requires ability to relate positively with people.

In addition to having a written and spoken knowledge of the English language, candidates may also be required to speak and write a foreign language at a colloquial skill level in carrying out position duties in conjunction with non-English speaking individuals.

Requires possession of a valid driver's license, daily access to an automobile, and proof of vehicle insurance.

Requires physical, visual and auditory ability to carry out assigned duties.

Requires the ability to satisfactorily pass an in-depth background check as a condition of employment.

CHILD PROTECTION ADVANCED SPECIALIST

POSITION CODE: 07161

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF WORK:

Under general direction, functions as an experienced, MSW-qualified child protection advanced specialist, performing casework and case management functions of advanced complexity and difficulty. Work roles included at this level involve recurring responsibilities for: complex case management services, substitute supervisor on a rotating basis, qualified technical consultant and mentor to less experienced/lower level staff, peer reviewer for the ongoing quality improvement process; assists unit supervisor with assignment and review of the more complex cases, analysis of unit statistics and acting as official unit liaison to law enforcement agencies, other agencies such as drug treatment agencies and/or public health, States Attorney Offices, hospitals and schools; provides work guidance and direction to a staff of less experienced/lower level child protection specialists with advice regarding investigative techniques, testimony preparation, paper work completion and areas of concern to be investigated; protects children by conducting investigations of alleged child neglect/abuse and sexual abuse; successfully completes agency-sponsored training programs and meets mandatory licensure requirements.

Council on Accreditation Standards for this work requires experienced, MSW qualified individuals to perform at this level, which is a stated requirement for this classification.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF WORK:

1. Assists unit supervisor with assignment of case investigations to protection specialist staff; reviews issues surrounding the report of abuse or neglect; recommends to the supervisor the appropriate worker to investigate the report, based on the experience, background and training of staff.
2. On a rotating basis, serves as designated supervisor in a unit, provides supervision to protection specialists in the absence of the supervisor; assigns cases to protection specialists or officially recommends case assignments; sets goals and objectives for protection specialists; sets priorities for protection specialist staff; reviews specialists' assigned work for accuracy, completeness and disposition; is delegated the authority to determine the validity and propriety of actions taken by protection specialists; counsels protection specialists on deficiencies.
3. Provides consultation to staff; reviews facts surrounding particular reports; advises investigators of strategic areas of concern to be investigated; provides ongoing review of the progress of the investigation; assists team staff by helping them prepare testimony for court; assists team staff by instructing them on investigation techniques and information necessary to substantiate their findings before the court.

CHILD PROTECTION ADVANCED SPECIALIST (Continued)

4. Assists team staff with problem investigations; accompanies workers on investigations if there exists a possibility of confronting hostile or violent people; convenes meetings with police officers or service providers or community members to resolve case problems and gather information on specific investigations; reviews findings reached by team protection specialists; assists workers with improving incomplete or inadequate investigations; provides mentoring and on-the-job training to lower level/less experienced staff on investigative techniques as necessary; assists with the evaluation of team staff; reviews and evaluates work products; provides input into performance evaluations of assigned team members.
5. Serves as the agency “ambassador” and liaison to law enforcement agencies, States Attorney Offices, hospitals and schools; maintains regular, formalized contacts with the groups cited above; under management direction, develops formal, written agreements with the above groups identifying protocol or reporting, information sharing, notification and public education responsibilities of each party; develops arrangements with police for assisting DCFS with investigations; completes arrangements with hospitals for providing medical treatment and examinations to alleged victims; makes arrangements with schools for allowing access to child subjects; delivers public education programs covering reporting requirements, investigative procedures and child abuse prevention services.
6. Manages general or specialized investigations including cases of an advanced complexity level or high profile; protects children by investigating advanced complexity alleged cases of child neglect/abuse and sexual abuse; interviews alleged victim and siblings in person; devises safety plan or, in consultation with the supervisor, removes child from home if necessary to prevent further abuse/neglect; interviews all subjects of the report including but not limited to birth parents, neighbors, teachers and others to support or refute allegations of abuse/neglect; prepares for and testifies at custody hearings; drives child home or to court designated alternate shelter; evaluates homes of relative for possible placement; using diligent search protocol, locates any missing subjects of reports, including child, perpetrator, etc.; prepares for and testifies in custody hearings and prosecutions of alleged perpetrators; documents and completes case files; prepares paper work according to Department rule, procedure and accreditation standards; documents services for payment of service providers. Advanced complexity casework assignments include but are not limited to specialty populations with issues of behavior disorder, developmental delay, mental illness, dual-diagnosis, sexually aggressive or abused youth and children.
7. Compiles and analyzes unit statistics; gathers data from office logs and other record sources; identifies trends and unusual occurrences affecting operations; prepares reports with problems noted and recommendations for improved operations and service delivery; assists supervisor with response to quality control reports.
8. Completes agency-sponsored training programs to develop greater professional skills and knowledge of the philosophy, rules and regulations of the agency and meet mandated licensure requirements.

CHILD PROTECTION ADVANCED SPECIALIST (Continued)

9. Participates in quality assurance and improvement activities related to assessing the quality of services delivered by participating in peer review; consumer-oriented satisfaction activities; local, site, and/or regional quality teams; and action planning.
10. Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS:

Education and Experience

Requires a master's degree in social work and two years of directly related professional experience as a Child Welfare Specialist or Child Protection Specialist in the Department of Children and Family Services.

The college or university issuing a degree must be accredited, and the degree program in social work must be approved by the Council on Social Work Education.

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities

Requires extensive knowledge of the basic principles and techniques in the child welfare field.

Requires an extensive knowledge of the Department of Children and Family Services rules and regulations as they apply to child abuse/neglect investigation.

Requires knowledge of child growth and development.

Requires ability to assess home situations and family relationships for child abuse/neglect.

Requires ability to write reports.

Requires the ability to successfully complete agency-sponsored training programs and meet mandated licensure requirements.

Requires ability to relate positively with people.

Requires ability to direct other team members.

In addition to having a written and spoken knowledge of the English language, candidates may also be required to speak and write a foreign language at a colloquial skill level in carrying out position duties in conjunction with non-English speaking individuals.

Requires possession of a valid driver's license, daily access to an automobile, and proof of vehicle insurance.

Requires physical, visual and auditory ability to carry out assigned duties.

Requires the ability to satisfactorily pass an in-depth background check as a condition of employment.